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RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 5800  
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RUEHSH/AMCONSUL SHENYANG 4323  
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SUBJECT: SEOUL - PRESS BULLETIN; May 04, 2009

TOP HEADLINES

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Chosun Ilbo, All TVs, VoiceofPeople  
"Hi Seoul Festival" Opening Ceremony Cancelled Due to Protests  
Marking First Anniversary of Last Year's Anti-U.S. Beef Rallies

JoongAng Ilbo  
President Lee Aims to Make Korea One of the World's Three Major  
Bicycle (Producing) Countries in Next Five Years

Dong-a Ilbo, Segye Ilbo  
Former National Intelligence Service Chief: "I Reported to Former  
President Roh on How His Son Spent Money in U.S."

Hankook Ilbo  
Education Ministry Set to Reject Presidential Aide's Move to Ban  
Private Cram Schools from Offering Late-Hour Classes after 10 p.m.

Hankyoreh Shinmun  
"Severe Crackdown" on Protesters: Some 200 Protesters Taken into  
Custody during Rally to Commemorate One-Year Anniversary  
of Last Year's Anti-U.S. Beef Protests

Seoul Shinmun  
Hyundai-Kia Overtakes Nissan as No. 6 in U.S. Car Sales

DOMESTIC DEVELOPMENTS

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According to an ROKG official, the USG recently asked Seoul to  
deploy troops to Afghanistan as part of reconstruction efforts in  
the war-torn country. This U.S. request may trigger a heated debate  
in the ROK over the troop deployment to Afghanistan. (Hankyoreh)

ROK health officials yesterday reported another "presumed" case of  
H1N1 flu (swine flu), raising the number of "presumed" cases in the  
ROK to two in total. The latest patient traveled on the same  
passenger plane as the ROK's first confirmed H1N1 patient. (All)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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The (U.S.) Council on Foreign Relations, in an April 27 report, said

that North Korea possesses a small nuclear arsenal but does not seem to have the ability to deploy nuclear weapons. (JoongAng)

Gary Samore, President Barack Obama's Policy Coordinator for Weapons of Mass Destruction, said in a May 1 speech at the Brookings Institution that North Korea is likely to conduct a nuclear test. Mr. Samore went on to say that the North would likely return to the Six-Party Talks within the year. (Dong-a, Hankyoreh, Segye, Seoul, all TVs)

According to the (North) Korean Central News Agency, North Korea's Foreign Minister Pak Ui-chun said at an April 29 ministerial meeting in Cuba of the Non-Aligned Movement that Pyongyang will not participate in the Six-Party Talks. (Dong-a, Segye)

#### MEDIA ANALYSIS

##### -North Korea

On Saturday (May 2), the ROK media gave wide attention to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's remarks at an April 30 Senate Appropriations Committee hearing, in which Secretary Clinton said that it was "implausible, if not impossible," that North Korea would return to the Six-Party Talks.

Secretary Clinton was further quoted: "We have absolutely no interest and no willingness on the part of this Administration to

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give them (the North Koreans) any economic aid at all. They are digging themselves into a deeper and deeper hole with the international community."

Most ROK media today carried inside-page reports quoting Gary Samore, President Barack Obama's Policy Coordinator for Weapons of Mass Destruction, as saying during a May 1 speech at the Brookings Institution that North Korea is likely to conduct a nuclear test. Mr. Samore was further quoted: "It is very clear that the North Koreans want to pick a fight. They want to kill the Six-Party Talks, but will return to the negotiation table within nine months."

Left-leaning Hankyoreh Shinmun, in particular, noted Mr. Samore's statement - that the U.S. would hold direct talks with North Korea only within the framework of the Six-Party Talks - and interpreted this as a sign of a change in U.S. approach toward North Korea.

In a related development, conservative Dong-a Ilbo editorialized today: "Observers say that Secretary Clinton's clear response is attributable to the lesson learned from 20 years of negotiations with North Korea. Although the Bill Clinton and George W. Bush Administrations placated the North with concessions in response to its bad behavior, they failed to prevent the North from crossing the nuclear threshold. ... The lesson the U.S. has learned should also apply to the ROK, China, Japan and Russia. If the five nations of the Six-Party Talks show no response (to North Korea's threats) ... and back down again, no one will have any expectation that the Six-Party Talks can resume, never mind resolving the North Korean nuclear issue. The ROK, China, Japan and Russia should actively follow the example of the U.S. ... If they drag their feet, they will once again be taken in by the North."

Conservative Chosun Ilbo's editorial echoed Dong-a's views, arguing: "It is time to break this vicious cycle (in which U.S.-North Korea talks and the Six-Party Talks reward, not punish, North Korea for its provocations, while the North beefs up its nuclear and missile capabilities.) ... If the Six-Party Talks no longer function properly, the ROK and the U.S. should discuss if there is any other alternative to the multilateral talks."

Right-of-center JoongAng Ilbo's Senior Journalist Kim Young-hie opined: "North Korea should stop its foolish march under the banner of nuclear weapons and missile threats. ... It should invite Stephen Bosworth to visit and return to the Six-Party Talks. The ROKG should also help Pyongyang make the right choice. This is because

the North's foolish march will only lead to another experiment with nuclear weapons and missiles. "

Right-of-center JoongAng Ilbo gave play to the (U.S.) Council on Foreign Relations' April 27 report claiming that North Korea possesses a small nuclear arsenal but does not seem to have the ability to deploy nuclear weapons.

#### - Troop Deployment to Afghanistan

Left-leaning Hankyoreh Shinmun front-paged a report today quoting an ROKG official as saying yesterday that the USG recently asked Seoul to deploy troops to Afghanistan as part of reconstruction efforts in the war-torn country. In an editorial, Hankyoreh urged the ROKG to flatly reject the U.S. request, arguing: "The only way to stabilize the Afghan situation is to reconcile with the Taliban, as the Afghan President stated. Resorting to military force, instead of political solutions, will only make the Afghan war another Vietnam war."

#### OPINIONS/EDITORIALS

The INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY SHOULD MAKE IT CLEAR THAT NO AID WILL BE POSSIBLE IF NORTH KOREA REJECTS SIX-PARTY TALKS  
(Dong-a Ilbo, May 4, 2009, Page 31)

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The U.S. responded strongly to North Korea's attempt to rattle the Six-Party Talks. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said at an April 30 Senate Appropriations Committee hearing, "we have absolutely no interest and no willingness on the part of this administration to give them any economic aid, including fuel oil, at all (as long as the North Koreans do not return to the Six-Party Talks)." Meanwhile, the (North) Korea Central News Agency reported May 2 that Foreign Minister Pak Ui-chun said during an April 29 ministerial meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement, "Pyongyang will not participate in the Six-Party Talks again and will not be bound by any Six-Party agreements." The North and the U.S. seem to be on a collision course as they ratchet up the tension.

If North Korea pulls out of the Six-Party Talks aimed at resolving the North Korean nuclear issue, the multilateral talks no longer have a reason for being. North Korea's boycott of the Six-Party Talks is a provocation that forces the other five participating countries (the ROK, the U.S., China, Japan and Russia) to make concessions. Now is the time when not only the U.S. but also the ROK, China, Japan and Russia should decide whether to continue or suspend the talks.

Observers say that Secretary Clinton's clear response is attributable to the lesson learned from 20 years of negotiations with North Korea. Although the Bill Clinton and George W. Bush Administrations placated the North with concessions in response to its bad behavior, they failed to prevent the North from crossing the nuclear threshold in the end. The Barack Obama Administration indicates that it will not repeat the same mistake. This lesson the U.S. has learned should also apply to the ROK, China, Japan and Russia.

North Korea even warned of its second nuclear test. Remembering that following the launch of a Taepodong-1 missile in August, 1998, and the nuclear test in October, 2006, the North had its own way in relations with the U.S. and at the Six-Party Talks, it now intends to escalate the crisis as much as possible. Nine months after the firing of the Taepodong-1 missile, the U.S. sent Special Adviser on North Korea William Perry to Pyongyang, and two months after the nuclear test, the U.S. welcomed the resumption of the Six-Party Talks, dragging itself into the North's scheme as a result.

If the five nations of the Six-Party Talks show no response while North Korea resumes reprocessing spent fuel rods -- violating the spirit of the Six-Party Talks (which began in August 2003), the February 13 and the October 3 Agreements of 2007 -- it would mean

that those five nations are avoiding their obligations. If the five parties back down again, no one will have any expectation that the Six-Party Talks can resume, never mind resolving the North Korean nuclear issue. The ROK, China, Japan and Russia should actively follow the position of the U.S. that should the North reject the (Six-Party) Talks, that they will provide no aid. If the five nations drag their feet, they will once again be taken in by the North.

#### NO DEPLOYMENT IN AFGHANISTAN

(Hankyoreh Shinmun, May 4, 2009, Page 23)

Some have said that the U.S. recently asked the South Korean government to: 1) consider sending troops and 2) expand its financial support for the reconstruction of Afghanistan. Since (according to some people) a major goal of Vice Foreign Minister Lee Yong-joon's visit to the United States last week was to fine-tune understandings on this issue, it seems clear that full-scale discussions of the matter have already begun. What the government must do now is to say clearly to the U.S. that there will be no redeployment of troops under any circumstance.

The South Korean government has unconditionally supported the U.S.' failed Middle East policy. As a price, the Taliban kidnapped 23 Koreans in 2007 (in Afghanistan) where two died, and Sgt. Yoon Jang-ho fell victim to terrorism. Also fresh in our memory is Kim Sun-il, who died after an armed group in Iraq kidnapped him in 2004,

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and the four Korean tourists who were killed in a terrorist attack in Yemen in March. The deployment of troops neither raised our international prestige nor improved the quality of the Korea-US alliance. Within South Korea, as there was neither justification nor practical benefits, all it did was cause deep fissures in domestic opinion. The Dongui and Dasan units in Afghanistan were withdrawn due to the belated recognition that it was a mistake to have sent them.

To consider sending troops again despite all this is something a government in proper order could not do. Yet, it is said that within the ruling party, there are people saying that in order to stop the U.S. from moving to engage in direct talks with North Korea, we should push the deployment of troops to Afghanistan. This is a regressive concept wedding Cold War thinking onto Great Power-centered "contract work" diplomacy. This is even more pathetic than when the Roh Moo-hyun government was pushed into sending troops to Iraq in order to try and get a lever to use in fine-tuning North Korea policy.

Moreover, the Afghanistan policy of the U.S. Obama Administration is coming under fire within and outside of the U.S. President Barack Obama, who made the strengthening of military intervention in Afghanistan a campaign pledge, decided after his inauguration to send 21,000 US troops as reinforcements. He has since been appealing to other countries to join in the deployment of troops but that appeal has thus far yielded no response. The major reason for the lack of results in the U.S. War in Afghanistan, which has lasted seven years and eight months, can be found not in insufficient troop strength but in its inappropriate approach. The only way to stabilize the Afghan situation is to reconcile with the Taliban, as the Afghan President stated. Resorting to military force, instead of political solutions, will only make the Afghan war another Vietnam War.

It is hoped the government clarifies its position so that there is no unnecessary controversy over the troop deployment issue. As the government has expressed earlier, it can consider increasing the size of its civilian reconstruction team in Afghanistan, but it should be cautious on that matter as well.

(This is a translation provided by the newspaper, and it is identical to the Korean version.)

CAN PRESSURE AND NEGLECT HELP KEEP N. KOREA IN CHECK?

U.S. President Barack Obama's coordinator for weapons of mass destruction policy, Gary Samore, said Friday, "It's very clear that the North Koreans want to pick a fight." Asked if he expected Pyongyang to carry out another nuclear test, Samore said, "I think they will." An official who personally dealt with the North Korean nuclear issue under the Clinton administration in the 1990s, Samore is the Obama Administration's nuclear proliferation "tsar." Predicting that North Korea would be forced back to negotiations within nine months, he said, "We'll just wait."

That suggests Washington won't hasten to negotiate with Pyongyang or yield to its provocations, and that the Six-Party Talks might not re-open within the year. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, too, recently saw little chance for the North to return to the Six-Party Talks and said the North Koreans are "digging themselves into a deeper and deeper hole with the international community."

The outline of the Obama Administration's North Korea policy is becoming clearer. The North recently threatened it would test another nuclear device and another intercontinental ballistic missile, and renew its clandestine uranium enrichment program. But the U.S. administration declined to respond directly but countered with UN sanctions. It is a tactic of pressure and neglect.

The choice is understandable. U.S.-North Korea dialogue and the Six-Party Talks have been criticized for not punishing but rewarding

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the North's provocations, while Pyongyang has continued to foster its nuclear and missile capabilities. It is time to break this vicious cycle. International examples, however, show that UN sanctions have had little effect on dictatorial states like North Korea. There are concerns, therefore, that Seoul and Washington may eventually have to negotiate with the North under conditions that favor Pyongyang. They must make sure that they do not repeat the mistakes of the past.

The (ROK) government should first talk to the U.S. about how both nations plan to handle situations when the North exacerbates the crisis through provocations such as an additional nuclear test, rather than simply going along with the pressure and neglect tactic.

If the Six-Party Talks no longer function properly, the ROK and the U.S. should discuss if there is any other alternative to the multilateral talks.

(This is a translation provided by the newspaper, and it is identical to the Korean version.)

STANTON